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THIS IS A
CALL TO PRAYER
FOR
THE LORD'S WORK
IN
COLOMBIA

COLOMBIAN NEWS



NUMBER FIFTY-NINE



Colombia, South America

INFORMATION SERVICE OF THE MENNONITE MISSION IN COLOMBIA

FIRST NATIONAL MENNONITE CHILDREN'S CAMP



"El Recreo," the school farm at Cachipay, was buzzing with laughter and activities from July 12 to 16. Seventy-eight children, along with fifteen adult staff met for the first try at a children's camp on a national basis. It was a new experience packed with surprises for both children and staff.

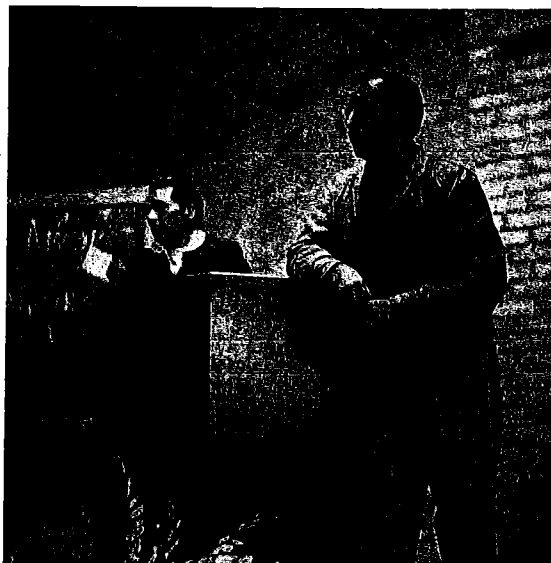
Bible exploration classes were taught by Leona Daza and Vernelle Yoder. Otilia Lugo was in charge of the story time, and, with her husband Luis, also taught handcrafts. Margaret Ediger and Glendon Klaassen taught the practical classes for teenagers. A most interesting feature was the talent show put on by the campers and their counselors. Other activities included Bible memory work, treasure hunts, hikes and cookouts, crafts and games.

It was a great experience for all and plans are already beginning for the next children's camp.



ANNUAL CHURCH RETREATS

The family retreat, which followed the business meetings, was a time of inspiration and soul-searching for those in attendance. The retreat was under the able direction of Polidoro Daza, pastor of the La Mesa church, Virginia Terreros, directress of the school in La Mesa, and Jaime Caro, pastor of the Ibague church. Retreaters from more distant parts took advantage of the retreat facilities. Those living in the vicinity of Cachipay and Anolaima came in each day to take part in the activities. It was a joy to be able to use the newly-constructed dining hall.



Caceres and Garza responding to questions from the audience.

Campo Elias Caceres and Juanleandro Garza were the guest speakers. Mrs. Caceres, pastor of a Christian and Missionary Alliance church in the city of Armenia, has had eleven years' experience in Christian work, including teaching seminary extension courses besides his pulpit ministry. His messages each morning and evening aimed toward deepening our relationship to God and leading us to greater personal victory in our Christian lives.

Mr. Garza's messages and discussions each morning were provocative and stimulating, leading us to fresh insights into how to interpret and apply God's revealed word honestly to our lives and today's problems. Working with the Presbyterian church, he is in adult educational work in Medellin.

Each afternoon these two men met with the retreaters to discuss specialized areas of interest. Mr. Caceres met with the parents to discuss their relationship with their children, and Mr. Garza met with the young people to discuss problems of youth and sex.



The lively song services under the direction of Glendon Klaassen, the recreation each afternoon, the film before each evening service, the special musical numbers presented by each church - all combined with the messages and discussion periods made the retreat a time of inspiration and blessing for all.

SUCCESSFUL RETREAT SEASON

The new dining hall at Cachipay was ready just in time for a full schedule of retreats during the month-long school recess from June 18-July 21.

Plans for extending the services of our beautiful "farm" to the entire evangelical community are finally being realized. During this vacation the World-Wide Evangelization Crusade Mission held a youth and a children's retreat on our grounds. The Inter-American Mission and the Assemblies of God churches each held a youth retreat, also. The Mennonite

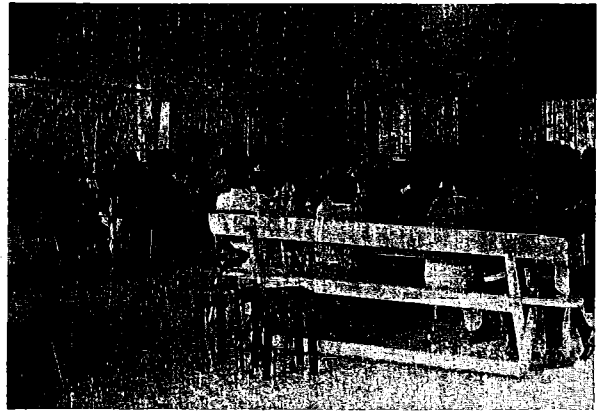
churches held a family retreat and a children's retreat.

The new dining hall is proving to serve a multiplicity of purposes in the retreat program. Being spacious and well-ventilated due to its open-sided structure, retreaters often preferred to meet there for evening services and craft activities. Of course, it's a very pleasant eating place, also. We are grateful for the gifts from North America that made this building possible.

NINETEENTH ANNUAL CHURCH CONVENTION

An annual highlight for the Colombian Mennonite churches is the church convention. The traditional site for these meetings is "El Recreo" in Cachipay.

This year the 19th national convention was held on July 5-6. In attendance were representatives of each church and institution, as well as the members of the "Mesa Directiva," governing body of the work in Colombia.



HERNANDEZ PRESIDES

Half of the time of the convention was dedicated to receiving reports from each of the five organized churches, from the two elementary schools, as well as the bookstore, decentralized Bible institute, retreat program, community development program and correspondence course division, to name some of the many facets of the work here.

One of the significant decisions taken at the convention had to do with serious planning toward beginning a new ministry in Engativa, a suburb of Bogota. The convention ended with a period of serious evaluation of our goals and our attainment of those goals. With God's help, our desire is to do everything in our power to obey the Great Commission and establish the church in Colombia.

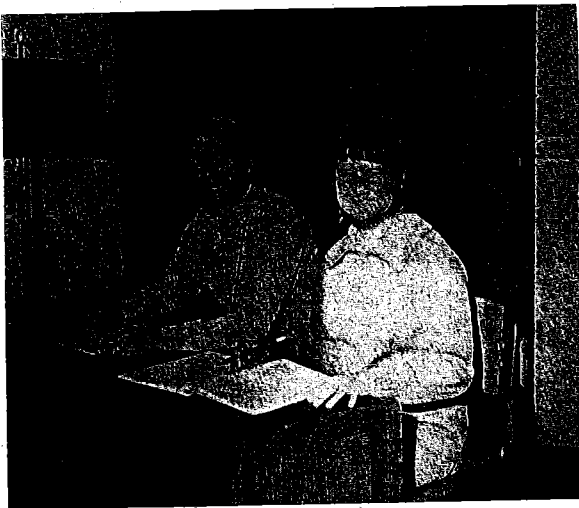


PASTOR DAZA FROM LA MESA

WORKERS LEAVE

On June 9, Mr. and Mrs. Barton Sprunger returned to the United States after teaching three years at Colegio Nueva Granada. This school is located in Bogota.

The Sprungers are now residing in Berne, Indiana, for the summer months. In the fall, Barton will be entering graduate school at the University of Michigan. He will be continuing in the field of physics. Judy, hopefully plans to find a teaching position in the Ann Arbor area. Barton and Judy, thank you for your contribution.



NEW WORKERS

Mark and Lillian Claassen have recently gone to San Jose, Costa Rica, for intensive language study. Mark has his doctorate in agronomy and will work in agricultural development projects in Cachipay and Anolaima. As things work out, he will probably also teach in the Bogota area. Lillian is a trained nurse whose parents are missionaries to Jos, Nigeria. Mark is from Beatrice, Nebraska.



BOOKSTORE "LA LUZ" UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

Miss Vernelle Yoder has become manageress of the Christian bookstore in La Mesa. Since its founding several years ago, Rev. John Wiebe, now on furlough in Canada, has given effective leadership to the store. There has been a steady increase in development and sales. Literature has become a sizeable project. Besides the across-the-counter sales, the literature is also taken to church and missions groups in other parts. Recently, this service was provided for the New Tribes Mission during its annual convention in Bogota. We're glad for this ministry to Christians as well as for the opportunity to reach non-believers with the gospel of Christ via the printed page.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTIAN SERVICE CLUBS

During the weekend of May 27 to 29 the Bogota Mennonite Church was host to a workshop on Christian Service Clubs for children. Mrs. Maria Sanchez from the Mennonite Brethren Church in Cali and the Rev. Josue Salazar from the Gospel Missionary Union in Cali directed the sessions. Approximately fifty-five people attended, representing the Mennonite churches as well as churches from six other denominations. The classes helpfully showed how children can be organized into groups by interested leaders and how they can help, understand, and direct them in meaningful activities.



Some of the topics discussed were crafts, Bible and nature study, worship, recreation, excursions and Christian service. It is hoped, of course, that many children's clubs will be started throughout the country.

Afterall, Christianity is for children, too, isn't it?

MENNONITE BROADCASTERS IN BOGOTA

The Rev. Armando Hernandez, president of the Colombian Mennonite Church, is the new president of the newly formed "Latin American Executive Board of Mennonite Broadcasts."

Representatives from Puerto Rico, Costa Rica, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Colombia, United States, Argentina and Mexico met in Bogota from May 10-12 to evaluate programs produced in Spanish by the various groups and to plan future cooperation and strategy. It was decided to program especially for youth audiences since over half of the population consists

of young people. Furthermore, the prevalent social, political and economic tensions present in Latin American life were considered as important factors in the content planning of Christian broadcasting in this part of the world. The board was concerned that the total message of reconciliation through Christ be presented in this phase of witness.

Rev. Hernandez will be traveling to Virginia in October to attend a further meeting of Mennonite Broadcasters. He is director of the Colombian program, "Answer."

BLUFFTON COLLEGE COMES TO COLOMBIA

On June 6 a group of Bluffton College students came to Bogota for a ten-week work-study seminar. The group consists of nineteen students and two sponsors, Dr. and Mrs. Marvin Wasser. Dr. Wasser is with the Psychology Department at Bluffton.

While studying Spanish at the Centro Colombo-Americano, the students lived in Colombian homes. The group has had a variety of learning experiences, including speakers, short field trips around the city of Bogota and weekend visits to many of the major cities in Colombia.

Beginning July 21st the students went into different learning situations in which they needed to speak the Spanish language and often be the leaders in their work. Their assignments ranged from teaching and secretarial work to helping with arts and crafts and working in agricultural projects. The group will terminate their stay in Colombia with three days of fun and relaxation at the Carribean coast.

Shown in the picture, after a meal at the Dave Steurys, are Dr. and Mrs. Wasser, their son Jim, Diane Bishop, Doug Friesen, Nedra Steury and Jan Hartzler.



NEW DIRECTOR

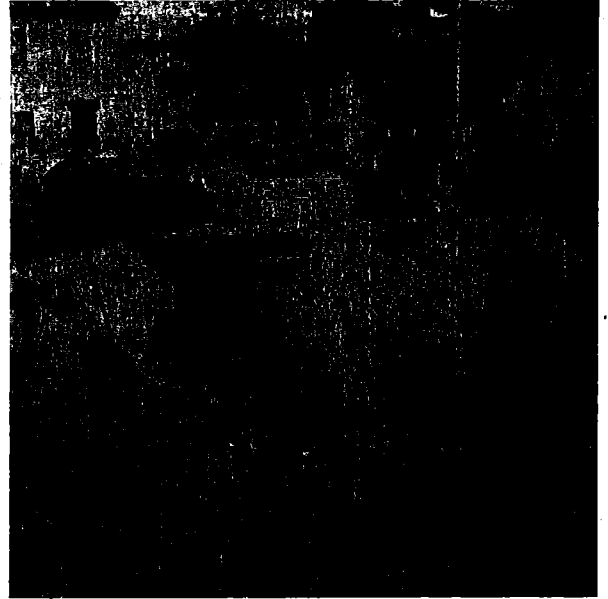
We welcome our former colleague in Colombia, Dr. Howard Habegger, as the new executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission. We look forward to working with him and assure him of our prayers for a fruitful ministry.



The Mennonite church and bookstore of La Mesa combined efforts to give a Christian testimony. A Bible and literature display was set up in Central Park in front of the Catholic church and numerous items were sold. During the evenings cultural and Christian films were shown on the streets for public viewing. Hundreds of tracts were handed out. We hope that interest in cattle will have led some to interest in Christ.

LA MESA WITNESS DURING BI-ANNUAL FAIR

Twice a year La Mesa becomes a cow town. The center streets are occupied by cattle and horses as cattlemen and farmers buy, sell and trade animals. Beer flows freely in the cafes and sidewalk bars. Business booms because many country people and tourists arrive for the five-day event.



LA MESA MAIN STREET SCENE

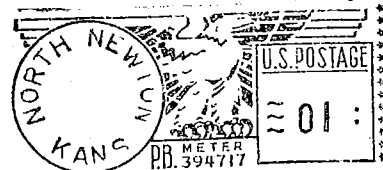
WELCOME VISITORS

Mr. Eldon Bargaen, former volunteer in Cachipay with his wife and family, spent a few days getting reacquainted with old friends and seeing the work in general. Eldon has helped out a great deal by drawing up the plans for the Anolaima church, educational unit and home, plus the new dining hall. This summer he is helping the Inter-American Mission in Colombia with several building projects around Medellin.

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Brookmyer from Goshen, Indiana, spent two weeks in Colombia recently to visit with their daughter, Nedra, and son-in-law, Dave Steury. The Steurys are teachers in Bogota at the Colegio Nueva Granada. The Brookmyers run an accounting business in Goshen. They were impressed with the thousands of people on the streets and the beautiful mountain scenery.

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WATER WORRIES SOLVED

Water is basic to life. When it is not readily available, life becomes uncomfortable. With a severe "winter" (rainy season) much of the tubing was washed out that supplied the school and campgrounds at Cachipay. A new tank was built on a large rock to provide adequate storage for the times when water is available from mountain sources. So, with each gallon of water needed being a problem, this should help solve 6,000 problems!



PRAISE AND PRAYER

PRAISE GOD for the blessings during the summer retreats.
PRAISE GOD for the campgrounds now available in Cachipay with adequate facilities.
PRAISE GOD for the new workers in preparation in language school.
PRAISE GOD for protection for various workers in their travels abroad.
PRAISE GOD for children's decisions made during camp.
PRAY for Mark and Lillian Claassen in language study.
PRAY for the children's service clubs being started.
PRAY for Larry and Edith Tschetter in language study.
PRAY for visas to enter Colombia for the Claassens and the Tschetters.
PRAY for a pastor for the Bogota Mennonite Church.

APPRECIATION

As a Colombian staff, we express our appreciation to Rev. Andrew Shelly for his help and ministry as executive secretary of the Commission on Overseas Mission. His personal friendship and professional guidance have meant much to all of us and to the Lord's work in Colombia. His example of dedication to Christ and mission has inspired us. Thank you, Andrew. May God bless you and may you find new joy as you are led to new adventures for Christ.